

Message Text

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ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 TRSE-00 AGR-05 SMI-01 NSF-01 HEW-02

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SUBJ: SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM--PROGRAM PLANS FOR FY 76

1. SUMMARY. OUTLINES OF PROGRAM PLANS IN TUNISIA BY ALL
SFCP FUNDING AGENCIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 1976 REQUIRED FOR
UPCOMING OCTOBER MEETINGS OF BI-TUNISIAN JOINT COMMISSION.
EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT SUCH OUTLINES MUST OF NECESSITY BE
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TENTATIVE DUE TO INTERNAL PROCESSING AND APPROVAL

MECHANISMS OF VARIOUS AGENCIES. HOWEVER, WE FEEL IT IMPERATIVE TO HAVE ROUGH IDEA OF SCALE OF EACH AGENCY'S PROGRAMS AND LIST OF PROJECTS WITH SHORT DESCRIPTIONS AND TENTATIVE BUDGETS IN ORDER IMPRESS ON TUNISIANS IMPORTANCE OF THESE PROJECTS TO TUNISIA AS WELL AS TO US SCIENTIFIC GOALS. WE ALSO WOULD LIKE INFORM GOT AT JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS THAT ROUGHLY \$2.5 MILLION EQUIVALENT WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR SUCH COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS IN THIS FISCAL YEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. AS ADDRESSEE AGENCIES ARE AWARE, USG AND GOT HAVE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED JOINT COMMISSION FOR PURPOSE OF REVIEWING VARIOUS BILATERAL ACTIVITIES AND EXCHANGING VIEWS ON METHODS OF IMPROVING RELATIONS IN GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PROBLEMS RELATING TO VARIOUS PROGRAMS. WE ANTICIPATE THAT AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF DISCUSSIONS IN UPCOMING MEETINGS OF JOINT COMMISSION, ESPECIALLY PROPOSED SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMISSION, IN OCTOBER WILL BE USE OF PL 480-GENERATED EXCESS DINARS, INCLUDING NATURE OF SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM, ITS PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE POTENTIAL. EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS IMPORTANT US RESOURCE IN TUNISIA HAS MADE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO OUR INTERESTS HERE BY IMPROVING CONTACTS BETWEEN US AND TUNISIAN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES AND HAS CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO TUNISIAN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TRANSFER OF AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE TO THIS COUNTRY IN ADDITION TO SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED BY US SPONSORING AGENCIES. UNFORTUNATELY, FEW TUNISIANS, ESPECIALLY AT A HIGH LEVEL, ARE AWARE OF PROGRAM AND ITS REAL CONTRIBUTION BECAUSE OF WIDELY DIVERSIFIED NATURE OF PROJECTS AND LOW KEY IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT IN PAST. FURTHERMORE, SOME GOT AGENCIES WOULD LIKE TO DIVERT THESE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PROJECTS MORE DIRECTLY UNDER THEIR CONTROL AND SATISFYING TUNISIAN OBJECTIVES ONLY. IN ORDER EFFECTIVELY CONFINE TUNISIAN REPRESENTATIVES AT JOINT COMMISSION OF VALUE OF SFC PROGRAM TO TUNISIAN INTERESTS, EMBASSY NEEDS ASSISTANCE OF ALL RPT ALL FUNDING AGENCIES IN PREPARATION OF MATERIALS AND ARGUMENTS TO BE USED IN OCTOBER MEETING.

3. EMBASSY REQUESTS EACH SFCP FUNDING AGENCY PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF ITS FY 76 PROGRAM IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TUNISIA, INCLUDING NAMES OF PROPOSED PROJECTS (BOTH NEW AND CONTINUING), BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF PROJECT CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES. WE ALSO DESIRE ESTIMATED COSTS FOR EACH PROJECT EVEN THOUGH RESULTING TOTAL FOR EACH AGENCY MAY EXCEED EVENTUAL ALLOCATION FOR FISCAL YEAR. EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT SUCH SUBMISSIONS MUST OF NECESSITY BE TENTATIVE DUE TO AGENCIES' APPROVAL PROCEDURES, BUT WE BELIEVE LIST OF PROJECTS SHOULD BE AS COMPLETE AS POSSI-

BLE EVEN IF SOME PROJECTS ARE SUBSEQUENTLY DROPPED. WE
FEEL THAT AGENCY PROGRAM PLANS, HOWEVER UNCERTAIN, WILL
BE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF EMBASSY PRESENTATION OF SFC
PROGRAM AT JOINT COMMISSION MEETING. WE THEREFORE URGE
ALL AGENCIES FORWARD THEIR PROGRAM PLANS TO EMBASSY AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE. ANY OTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION,
COMMENTS OR IDEAS WHICH FUNDING AGENCIES MAY HAVE FOR
INCLUSION IN PRESENTATION AT JOINT COMMISSION MEETINGS
WILL BE OST APPRECIATED.

4. CURRENT EMBASSY ESTIMATES OF MISSION-
SUPPORT RELATED EXPENDITURES IN DINARS FOR FY 76
(INCLUDING UNDP CONTRIBUTIONS, FBO EXPENDITURES AND
ACCOMMODATION EXCHANGE) TOTAL LESS RPT LESS THAN FIVE
MILLION DOLLARS EQUIVALENT (ABOUT TWO MILLION DINARS AT
CURRENT EXCHANGE RATE). THIS WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT
FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SFCP'S WILL BE GREATER IN FY 76
THAN IN FY 75, OR ABOUT \$2.5 MILLION. IF THIS FIGURE
CONFIRMED, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS IT BE ANNOUNCED AT JOINT
COMMISSION MEETINGS TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO ANOTHER IMPOR-
TANT US-SUPPORTED PROGRAM IN TUNISIA.
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